

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6863
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
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AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 4 CAPE TOWN 0412

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: VIEWS IN NAMIBIA ON THE WESTERN PROPOSAL

1. SUMMARY: CONTRARY TO BRAND FOURIE'S INFORMAL BRIEFING OF THE CAPE TOWN CONTACT GROUP FEB. 27, EMBOFF FOUND ON VISIT TO WINDHOEK THAT INTERNAL PARTIES APPEAR DIVIDED ON THE WESTERN PROPOSAL FOR NAMIBIA WITH RESPECT TO THE SAG TROOP AND UN FORCE ISSUES. DTA AND AKTUR SPOKESMEN NOT UNEXPECTEDLY FAVORED THE SOUTH AFRICAN POSITION, WHILE INTERNAL SWAPO OFFICIALS REITERATED SWAPO'S NEW YORK POSITION BUT SAID THE PARTY WAS WILLING TO NEGOTIATE FURTHER ON THE ISSUES. NAMIBIA NATIONAL FRONT (NNF) OFFICIALS AND CHURCH LEADERS SUPPORTED THE WESTERN PROPOSAL ON TROOPS, WITH MINOR DIFFERENCES IN THE CASE OF THE NNF.

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THE FEDERAL PARTY LEADER FAVORED A SAG RESIDUAL FORCE OF 3,000 BUT WANTED A CONSIDERABLY LARGER UN FORCE. THE WALVIS BAY ISSUE CUTS ACROSS PARTY LINES, DIVIDING EVEN THE DTA. SWAPO LEADERS EXPRESSED THEIR DISTRUST OF THE WESTERN POSITION ON WALVIS BAY, BUT DISPLAYED SOME FLEXIBILITY ON THE ISSUE. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF DTA, MOST GROUPS FAVORED CONTINUED NEGOTIATIONS, AND DO NOT FEEL COMMITTED TO A DEC. 31 INDEPENDENCE DATE. THE DIVERSITY

OF VIEWS WILL MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR THE SAG TO ASSERT CREDIBLY THAT THE PEOPLE OF NAMIBIA CLEARLY FAVOR EARLY ELECTIONS AND OTHER SOUTH AFRICAN POSITIONS REGARDLESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONSEQUENCES. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF VISITED WINDHOEK FEB. 27 TO MARCH 2 AND MET WITH LEADERS OF ALL MAJOR INTERNAL GROUPS AS WELL AS A NUMBER OF OTHER OBSERVERS. WITH THE NOTABLE EXCEPTION OF THE DEMOCRATIC TURN-HALLE ALLIANCE (DTA), MOST INTERNAL LEADERS WANT THE WESTERN FIVE EFFORTS TO CONTINUE AND HOPE THAT AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION CAN BE ACHIEVED. THERE IS NEVERTHELESS STILL CONSIDERABLE PESSIMISM ABOUT THE PROSPECTS OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL, EVEN AMONG THOSE WHO SUPPORT IT.

THE TROOP ISSUE

3. THE TROOP ISSUE REMAINS THE MOST CONTENTIOUS INSIDE NAMIBIA. DTA ATTITUDES ARE FIRM AND SUPPORT A CONTINUED STRONG SOUTH AFRICAN PRESENCE. SOME DAT LEADERS BELIEVE THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAS ALREADY CONCEDED TOO MUCH. BILLY MARAIS, SECRETARY OF THE DTA, EXPLAINED THAT THE DTA WOULD NEVER AGREE TO TROOP LEVELS SUGGESTED BY THE WEST, WHICH WOULD MEAN "COMMITTING SUICIDE." OTHER DTA LEADERS, PARTICULARLY ITS PRESIDENT, CLEMENS KAPUUNO, EXPRESSED DISTRUST THAT A UN FORCE COULD BE IMPARTIAL IN VIEW OF THE UN'S LONG HISTORY OF SUPPORT FOR SWAPO. HE AND OTHERS DOUBTED THAT THE UN WOULD BE WILLING OR ABLE TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST SWAPO VIOLATIONS OF AN AGREEMENT. THEY ALSO RAISED AGAIN

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THE "CUBAN THREAT" SHOULD SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS WITHDRAW. THE QUESTION OF "WHITE CONFIDENCE" WAS CLEARLY ON THE MINDS OF DTA SUPPORTERS AND OTHERS, INCLUDING LEADERS OF AKTUR, WHO SUGGESTED THAT A TROOP REDUCTION WOULD LEAD TO AN EXODUS OF WHITES, A COLLAPSE OF ADMINISTRATION AND SERVICES, AND "CHAOS," ESPECIALLY IN THE NORTH. THERE WAS LITTLE OR NO KNOWLEDGE OF HOW A UN PEACEKEEPING FORCE WOULD OPERATE, AND SOME OBSERVERS SAID THAT IF THE MECHANICS OF A UN OPERATION WERE SPELLED OUT CLEARLY IT MIGHT GO A LONG WAY TOWARD LESSENING WHITE HOSTILITY TOWARD THE PLAN.

4. INTERNAL SWAPO'S POSITION ON THE TROOP ISSUE, AS PUT FORWARD BY PUBLICITY SECRETARY MOKGANEDI TLHABANELLO (WHO ATTENDED THE NEW YORK TALKS) AND CONCURRED IN BY SEVERAL OTHER SWAPO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS, WAS BASICALLY THAT GIVEN AT NEW YORK. THE INTERNAL LEADERS STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT SWAPO HAD ACCEPTED THE PRINCIPLE OF SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS IN THE TERRITORY AND THAT THEIR EXACT LOCATION WAS NEGOTIABLE. THEY SAID THAT IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN TROOP CONCENTRATION TO BE AT GROOTFONTEIN, WHICH HAD BEEN THE "CENTER OF SOUTH AFRICAN OPERATIONS AGAINST SWAPO AND ALSO OF SAG SUPPORT OF UNITA." THEY ADDED THAT THEY WERE STILL WILLING

TO DISCUSS TROOPS BUT WOULD LIKE TO SEE CONCESSIONS FROM THE
OTHER SIDE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 4 CAPE TOWN 0412

5. LUTHERAN, CATHOLIC, AND ANGLICAN CHURCH LEADERS SAID THAT
THEY SUPPORT THE WESTERN INITIATIVE IN ITS
ENTIRETY, INCLUDING OUR PROPOSALS ON TROOPS.
NNF LEADERS GERSON VEII (PRESIDENT OF SWANU) AND R.V.
RUKORO (SECRETARY GENERAL OF SWANU AND PUBLICITY
AND INFO SECRETARY OF NNF) SAID THE NNF HAD
ORIGINALLY FAVORED THE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL SOUTH AFRICAN
TROOPS, BUT FOLLOWING THE PROXIMITY TALKS THEY NOW
ACCEPT THE WESTERN TROOP PROPOSALS. THE SUGGESTED, HOWEVER,
THAT UN TROOPS SHOULD OUTNUMBER SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS BY
TWO TO ONE. THE NNF, THEY SAID, DOES NOT SUPPORT THE
SWAPO POSITION THAT THE REMAINING TROOPS SHOULD BE
MOVED TO KRASBURG. THE SMALL WHITE FEDERAL PARTY IS
"SYMPATHETIC" TO SOUTH AFRICA'S DEMAND FOR A RESIDUAL
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FORCE OF 3,000 TROOPS, BUT PARTY LEADER BRYAN O'LINN SAID THAT THESE FORCES SHOULD BE CONFINED TO BASE. O'LINN SAID THAT HE DID NOT "NECESSARILY" SUPPORT THE IDEA OF EIGHT SOUTH AFRICAN BASES IN THE NORTH. O'LINN WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SEE A LARGE UN MILITARY FORCE OF 4-5,000 TROOPS. HE SAID HE WAS IMPRESSED WITH A UN PEACE-KEEPING BRIEFING HE RECEIVED IN NEW YORK, WHICH DISPELLED HIS ANXIETIES THAT A UN FORCE MIGHT NOT BE FAIR OR EFFECTIVE. THE NATIONAL PARTY ALLIANCE, AKTUR, EXPRESSED NO FIRM POSITION ON TROOP NUMBERS AND DISPOSITION, BUT STRESSED THE NEED FOR WHITE CONFIDENCE AND TRUSTS THE SAG TO NEGOTIATE A FAIR DEAL.

WALVIS BAY

6. THE WALVIS BAY ISSUE REMAINS CONTENTIOUS, PARTICULARLY WITH SWAPO, BUT INTERNAL SWAPO LEADERS DEMONSTRATED A DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER N. TAAIPOI CALLED WALVIS BAY "A SMALL ISSUE". OTHER EXECUTIVES AGREED AND WONDERED WHY THE WEST WAS MAKING A "BIG DEAL" OF IT. TLHABANELLO EXPLAINED THAT BY BRINGING UP THE ISSUE, SWAPO WAS HOPING TO AVOID FUTURE BLOODSHED WHICH WOULD BE THE ULTIMATE RESULT OF NOT INCLUDING IT IN AN AGREEMENT, SINCE SOUTH AFRICA WOULD NEVER HAND THE ENCLAVE PEACEFULLY TO AN INDEPENDENT SWAPO GOVT. HE ADDED THAT SINCE THE WEST HAD TAKEN NO PUBLIC POSITION ON WALVIS BAY, SWAPO WAS SUSPICIOUS THAT WE SUPPORT THE SAG STAND AND MAY EVEN HAVE COME TO A PRIVATE AGREEMENT WITH THE SAG. HE SAID THAT IF THE WEST COULD LET IT BE KNOWN OUTSIDE THE TALKS THAT IT SUPPORTED SWAPO ON THIS ISSUE, THEN SWAPO WOULD BE WILLING TO LEAVE IT OUT OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

7. WALVIS BAY IS ALSO AN ISSUE OF INTEREST AMONG OTHER INTERNAL
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GROUPS. NNF CONSIDERS WALVIS BAY AN INTEGRAL PART OF NAMIBIA, BUT IS WILLING TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE AFTER INDEPENDENCE. MOST BLACK DTA LEADERS SUPPORT THIS POSITION. BILLY MARAIS INSISTED THAT OFFICIAL DTA POLICY SEES WALVIS BAY AS PART OF SOUTH AFRICA, HOWEVER CLEMENS KAPUUNO, WAS EQUALLY ADAMANT THAT DTA REGARDS IT AS PART OF NAMIBIA. EVEN AKTUR LEADER EBEN VAN ZIJL INDICATED THAT WALVIS BAY SHOULD PROBABLY BE PART OF AN INDEPENDENT NAMIBIA, ALTHOUGH HE QUALIFIED THIS BY SAYING HE WOULD NOT LIKE TO CHALLENGE THE SOUTH AFRICAN LEGAL POSITION AND THAT USE OF THE PORT WAS MORE IMPORTANT THAN POSSESSION OF THE ENCLAVE.

OTHER ISSUES IN THE WESTERN PROPOSALS

8. A NUMBER OF OTHER RELATIVELY MINOR ISSUES WERE RAISED IN PASSING BY SEVERAL INTERNAL GROUPS. NNF COMPLAINED THAT IT WAS NOT BEING GIVEN THE RECOGNITION IT DESERVED, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF ITS HELPFUL ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PROPOSALS. VEII COMPLAINED PARTICULARLY THAT AHTASSARI WOULD NOT BE IMPARTIAL, AND NOTED THAT IN THE PAST AHTASSARI HAD REFUSED TO MEET WITH SWANU REPS. VEII ALSO REQUESTED A COPY OF THE LATEST CLARIFICATIONS ONCE THEY HAVE BEEN COMPLETED.

9. INTERNAL SWAPO REAISED AGAIN THE ISSUE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL AND THE UNSR. TLHABANELLO WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN THE MECHANISM FOR RESOLVING DISPUTES.

10. CURIOUSLY, THE ISSUE OF SWAPO DETAINEES WAS RAISED INDEPENDENTLY BY BILLY MARAIS, GERSON VEII, AND A LEADING WINDHOEK JOURNALIST, ALL OF WHOM SUGGESTED THAT THE WEST MAY BE PLANNING "A DEAL" UNDER WHICH SHIPANGA AND THE OTHER DETAINEES IN TANZANIA ARE RELEASED BUT NOT ALLOWED TO RETURN TO NAMIBIA.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 4 CAPE TOWN 0412

GENERAL ATTITUDES ON THE PROPOSALS

11. DTA LEADERS IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS FRANKLY CALLED FOR AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT AND EARLY ELECTIONS. THESE LEADERS REMAIN HIGHLY SKEPTICAL AND SUSPICIOUS OF BOTH WESTERN AND SWAPO INTENTIONS. DTA SECRETARY BILLY MARAIS, FOR EXAMPLE, SAID THAT "QUITE FRANKLY, THE WESTERN PROPOSALS ARE NONSENSE," AND FURTHER CHARACTERIZED THEM AS "A SWAPO PLAN". EXPANDING ON THIS, HE ATTEMPTED TO PORTRAY THE WESTERN POSITION AS SYNONOMOUS WITH THAT OF SWAPO, ASSERTING THAT THE WEST IS DEMANDING THAT ALL SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS BE RESTRICTED TO KARSBURG AND THAT WALVIS BAY BE INCLUDED IN AN INDEPENDENT NAMIBIA. CLEMENS KAPUUNO SUGGESTED THAT THE NEW YORK TALKS WERE "NOT IMPORTANT". BOTH MEN, TOGETHER WITH COLORED DTA
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LEADER ANDREW KLOPPERS, MAE CLEAR THEIR PREFERENCE FOR AN INTERNAL SOLUTION. KAPUUNO WAS NOT CONCERNED THAT INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION WOULD NOT BE FORTHCOMING IN THE CASE OF AN INTERNAL SOLUTION, AND SUGGESTED THAT SOME WESTERN AND FRENCH AFRICAN COUNTRIES MIGHT RECOGNIZE AN INTERNAL SOLUTION WITHIN A YEAR. HE SAID THAT ON A RECENT TRIP TO THE UK, FRANCE AND GERMANY (CAPE TOWN 0325), DTA LEADERS HAD FOUND GREAT SYMPATHY FOR THEIR POSITION. HE ADDED THAT HE HAD BEEN INVITED TO VISIT THE IVORY COAST AND HOPED SOON TO TAKE UP THE OFFER. DTA LEADERS ALSO PLAYED UP SAM NUJOMA'S REPORTED REPUDIATION OF MAJORITY RULE (CAPE TOWN 384) AND ASSERTED THAT SWAPO WOULD BE UNWILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN A FREE AND FAIR ELECTION.

12. INTERNAL SWAPO LEADERS, BY CONTRAST, IN THEIR DISCUSSIONS APPEARED FLEXIBLE AND WERE CONFIDENT THAT THEY HAD BEEN REASONABLE AT THE NEW YORK TALKS. MOKGANEDI TLHABANELLO, EXPLAINED THAT PRIOR TO NEW YORK THE WESTERN POWERS HAD BEEN "EXPLORING" RATHER THAN NEGOTIATING, SO SWAPO HAD EXPRESSED ITS POSITION FIRMLY. AT NEW YORK, BY CONTRAST, SWAPO WANTED TO SHOW ITS WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE IN GOOD FAITH, AND SO MADE SIGNIFICANT CONCESSIONS ON MOST ISSUES. TLHABANELLO SADDENED THAT SWAPO MIGHT BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT FURTHER COMPROMISES.

13. ASIDE FROM THE DTA, WHICH IS ADAMANT THAT EARLY ELECTIONS SHOULD TAKE PLACE, MOST OTHER INTERNAL GROUPS APPEARED FLEXIBLE ON THE DATE FOR ELECTIONS AND INDEPENDENCE. TLHABANELLO SAID THAT THE DEC 31, 1978

TARGET WAS A "TURNHALLE DATE" WHICH NEED NOT BE ENFORCED.
MOST OTHER PARTIES, WHILE THEY HOPE FOR INDEPENDENCE AT THE
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EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE, CONSIDER THAT INDEPENDENCE
WILL HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL 1979 IF THERE IS TO BE A FREE AND
FAIR CAMPAIGN AND ADEQUATE TIME TO DRAFT A CONSTITUTION.
THE FEDERAL PARTY WAS PARTICULARLY ADAMANT ON THIS POINT.
EBEN VAN ZIJL OF AKTUR INDICATED THAT HE WAS IN NO HURRY
FOR ELECTIONS AND INDEPENDENCE. MOST PARTIES, INCLUDING
DTA, ARE STILL THINKING IN TERMS OF TWO ELECTIONS, THE
FIRST FOR A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, AND THE
SECOND FOR A GOVERNMENT.

14. DESPITE GENERAL SUPPORT OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL BY
MODERATE AND CENTRIST GROUPS, THE POSSIBILITY OF ELECTIONS
WITHOUT AN INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENT LEAVES THESE
GROUPS IN A QUANDRY. WHILE SUCH ELECTIONS WOULD BE
RELISHED BY DTA AND BOYCOTTED BY SWAPO, THE OTHERS
ARE UNCERTAIN WHAT THEIR STANCE WOULD BE. THE NNF
AND THE FEDERAL PARTY REMAIN UNDECIDED ON WHETHER
THEY WOULD BOYCOTT SUCH ELECTIONS, AND HAVE ADOPTED A
WAIT-AND-SEE ATTITUDE AND INDICATED THAT THEIR ACTIONS
WILL DEPEND TO A LARGE EXTENT ON THE CONDITIONS UNDER
WHICH ELECTIONS ARE HELD. CHURCH LEADERS ALSO
APPEAR UNCERTAIN OF THEIR POSITION, AND WOULD HESITATE
TO TAKE A CLEARLY PARTISAN STAND BY URGING AN ELECTION
BOYCOTT. AT PRESENT REV. DE VRIES IS HOPING TO
UNDERTAKE A POLITICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM TO MAKE THE
VIEWS OF THE VARIOUS PARTIES KNOWN TO THE ELECTORATE,
BUT NEITHER HE NOR OTHER CHURCH LEADERS HAVE FIRM IDEAS OF
THEIR COURSE SHOULD THE WESTERN INITIATIVE FAIL.

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AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 4 OF 4 CAPE TOWN 0412

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (MISNUMBERED PARAGRAPHS)

PIK BOTHA'S VISIT

15. ALTHOUGH OFFICIALLY FOREIGN MINISTER PIK BOTHA MET ONLY WITH THE ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL DURING HIS WINDHOEK VISIT (CAPE TOWN 0350), HE DID TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET INFORMALLY WITH CHURCH LEADERS, INCLUDING BISHOPS DE VRIES AND AUALA. DE VRIES SAID HE HAD TOLD BOTHA THAT THE CHURCHES SUPPORTED THE WESTERN PROPOSALS AND WERE DISAPPOINTED AT SOUTH AFRICA'S ABRUPT WITHDRAWAL FROM THE NEW YORK TALKS. ACCORDING TO DE VRIES, AUALA TOLD BOTHA THE SAME THING.

16. AMONG POLITICAL GROUPS THE NNF ALSO TOLD BOTHA,
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THROUGH STEYN, THAT THE NNF SUPPORTED THE WESTERN PROPOSALS. CONTRARY TO PREVIOUS REPORTS (CAPE TOWN 0350), SWAPO, WE WERE TOLD, DID RECEIVE AN INVITATION TO MEET WITH THE AG IN CONNECTION WITH BOTHA'S VISIT, BUT REFUSED. MOST GROUPS CRITICIZED BOTHA'S DECISION TO CONSULT ONLY INDIRECTLY WITH INTERNAL LEADERS. ONE WELL PLACED CIVIL SERVANT SAID PRIVATELY THAT BOTHA HAD TAKEN THIS POSITION FOR FEAR THAT SWAPO MIGHT CONSENT TO MEET FACE TO FACE WITH HIM.

17. COMMENT: THE RANGE OF VIEWS EXPRESSED BY THE INTERNAL GROUPS CONFLICTS SHARPLY WITH BRAND FOURIE'S ASSERTION TO THE CAPE TOWN FIVE (FEB 27, CAPE TOWN 0373) THAT ASIDE FROM SWAPO, WHOSE VIEWS WERE NOT GIVEN TO THE ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL, "NOT A SINGLE POLITICAL GROUP IN NAMIBIA" WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL REGARDING SAG TROOP LEVELS AND DISPOSITION AND ALL HAD EXPRESSED

CONCERN OVER THE BASIC PROVISIONS OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL
REGARDING THE SIZE AND FUNCTION OF UNTAG. THE ACTUAL SITUATION
IN NAMIBIA SUGGESTS THAT THE SAG WILL HAVE DIFFICULTY
BACKING UP ANY CLAIM THAT A MOVE TO PROCEED UNILATERALLY
WITH ELECTIONS IS SUPPORTED BY POPULAR OPINION IN NAMIBIA.
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